



## RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL CALENDAR

Did you know that there are over 160 recognised religious and cultural dates in the UK calendar year? At Inquilab we acknowledge, respect, and positively embrace the cultures and differences that make up the communities in which we live and work. Whilst we cannot actively promote and celebrate every one of these, we observe the following key religious dates – along with a number of social and health awareness campaigns - which we believe are important to our employees and to our customers. Please scroll down to access the full list of religious and cultural days throughout the calendar year. *[Please note that the following is drawn from a number of reputable internet sources. If we have omitted to include an important event, please contact our Marketing & Communications team.]* Produced: November 2020

### KEY EVENTS SUPPORTED BY INQUILAB

	2020-2021	2021-2022
<b>Ramadan, followed by Eid al-Fitr</b>	April 24, 2020 – 23 May 2020 Sunday, May 24, 2020	April 13 – May 12, 2021 Thursday, May 13, 2021
<b>Eid al-Adha</b>	Thursday July 30 – 3 August, 2020	Monday July 19 – July 23, 2021
<b>Diwali</b>	Saturday, November 14, 2020	November 4, 2021
<b>Christmas / Boxing Day</b>	Friday, December 25 / 26, 2020	Saturday, December 25 / 26, 2021
<b>Pride</b>	July	July
<b>Black History Month</b>	October	October
<b>International Women's Day</b>	Sunday March 8, 2020	Monday March 8, 2021
<b>Mental Health Week</b>	May 18 – 24, 2020	May 17 – 23, 2021
<b>World Environment Day / World Oceans Day</b>	Friday June 5, 2020	Saturday June 5, 2020

SCROLL DOWN FOR OUR COMPREHENSIVE UK CALENDAR OF RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL EVENTS

# UK CALENDAR OF RECOGNISED RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL EVENTS

## JANUARY

†	<p><b>NEW YEAR'S DAY/HOGMANAY National</b></p> <p>A day widely observed, as is New Year's Eve the preceding night, throughout the UK, and more especially in Scotland, where bagpipes, haggis and first footing are widespread.</p>
†	<p><b>THE CIRCUMCISION OR NAMING OF JESUS Christian</b></p> <p>Celebrates the circumcision and naming of Jesus in accordance with Jewish custom.</p>
𑖀	<p><b>GANJITSU Japanese</b></p> <p>Threeday New Year's celebrations during which Japanese businesses are closed, families spend time together, decorations are put up and the first visit of the year is paid to Shinto shrines.</p>
☪	<p><b>BIRTHDAY OF GURU GOBIND SINGH (1666 CE) (Bakrami Lunar Calendar) Sikh and BIRTHDAY OF GURU GOBIND SINGH (1666 CE) (Nanakshahi Calendar) Sikh</b></p> <p>On the 2nd and 13th of January Birth Anniversary of the tenth Guru, who instituted the practice of the Five Ks and established the Order of the <i>Khalsa</i> on Vaisakhi (Baisakhi). An <i>akhand path</i>, an unbroken reading of the whole of the Guru Granth Sahib, spreads over a 48 hour period.</p>
†	<p><b>ANNUAL METHODIST COVENANT SERVICE Christian</b></p> <p>Usually held on the first or second Sunday, Methodists celebrate an annual Covenant Service in which they pledge themselves to the service of God using a specific form of words.</p>
†	<p><b>THEOPHANY / BAPTISM OF CHRIST Christian (Orthodox)</b></p> <p>Orthodox Christians commemorate the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. 'Theophany' means 'Manifestation of God'. Jesus 'miracle at Cana in Galilee is also remembered</p>
†	<p><b>EPIPHANY Christian (Anglican and Roman Catholic)</b></p> <p>Celebrates the visit of the magi/wise men to the infant Jesus, bearing symbolic gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. This is the twelfth day of Christmas.</p>
†	<p><b>CHRISTMAS EVE AND DAY Christian (Rastafarian) and ETHIOPIAN CHRISTMAS DAY Christian</b></p> <p>Falling on 6 / 7 January. Eastern Orthodox: Julian calendar); Rastafarian. Many Orthodox churches celebrate Christmas (and other fixed festivals) thirteen days after the Western churches. To Rastafarians this is a time not only to celebrate the birth of Jesus in the manner prescribed by tradition, but also to reflect on this event in the context of the original prophecy of his birth, seen as a manifestation of God not only as Priest but as King</p>
ॐ	<p><b>BIRTHDAY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA Hindu</b></p> <p>On 10th January - Vivekananda, an Indian Hindu monk and a disciple of Ramakrishna, was a key figure in the introduction of the Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world.</p>
†	<p><b>BAPTISM OF CHRIST</b></p> <p>Anglican and Roman Catholic Christians commemorate the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist.</p>
ॐ	<p><b>MAKAR SANKRANTI/LOHRI/PONGAL Hindu</b></p> <p>This is a day for almsgiving and patching up quarrels. It is celebrated with rice sugar, pancakes, halva or cornmeal <i>chapattis</i>, eaten around a fire</p>
☸	<p><b>SHINRAN MEMORIAL DAY Buddhist</b></p> <p>Shinran was the founder of Jodo Shin-shu, one of the schools of Pure Land Buddhism.</p>

✝	<p><b>WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY Christian</b>  United services are held, and dialogue on unity is encouraged; some worshippers visit other people's churches or invite preachers from denominations different from their own.</p>
☸	<p><b>WORLD RELIGION DAY Baha'i and other groups</b>  This day promotes interfaith understanding by emphasizing factors common to all faiths. It was first introduced among Baha'i communities in the 1950s, and is now celebrated by a wider spread of communities, including the Baha'i, usually on the third Sunday of January.</p>
🏮	<p><b>NEW YEAR FESTIVAL/CHUNJIE/YUAN TAN Chinese</b>  Celebrations last for three or more days, and involve fireworks, dances (e.g. the famous Lion Dance) and gifts of paper money, flowers and sweets. Business accounts are settled and all debts paid before the New Year begins.</p>
🌀	<p><b>HONEN MEMORIAL DAY Buddhist</b>  Honen (1133-1212 CE) is one of the outstanding figures in the history of Japanese Buddhism, and was the founder of Jodo Shinshu, one of the schools of Pure Land Buddhism.</p>
🌀	<p><b>LOSAR Buddhist</b>  Tibetan New Year festival, but it is often celebrated in Nepal as well. Although largely a secular celebration, it also includes the rededication of the country to Buddhism. It especially celebrates the miracles performed by the historical Buddha at Sravasti, the capital city of the kingdom of Kosala.</p>
	<p><b>HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY National</b>  A day for remembrance of people who suffered, chiefly at the hands of the Nazis during the second World War but also in other persecutions. It aims to keep memory fresh and ensure that no such atrocity happens again.</p>
ॐ	<p><b>SARASVATI PUJA/VASANT PANCHAMI Hindu</b>  Widely celebrated in North India, this festival marks the beginning of spring. For Hindus it is usually linked with Saraswati, the goddess of learning and the arts. Yellow is her associated colour.</p>
🕊	<p><b>JASHN-E SADEH Zoroastrian [Iranian]</b>  A mid winter bonfire festival to signify that days are getting longer. The litany to fire, the <i>Atash Niyayeesh</i>, is recited, and Iranian legends are told of King Hoshang (who discovered the art of making fire). Piping hot stew, dancing and merry making feature.</p>
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	
🌱	<p><b>IMBOLC/CANDLEMAS Pagan</b>  Imbolc/Candlemas celebrates the awakening of the land and the growing power of the Sun. Snowdrops, which appear at this time of the year, are seen as the heralds of spring.</p>
✝	<p><b>THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD/ OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE/CANDLEMAS Christian</b>  Congregations hold lighted candles to recall the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, and Mary's following Jewish tradition after the birth of a son. His recognition by the aged Simeon is expressed in the words of the <i>Nunc Dimittis</i>.</p>
𠄎	<p><b>SETSUBUN/BEAN SCATTERING Japanese</b>  The day for the Bean Scattering ceremony, performed both in homes and in temples.</p>
🏮	<p><b>LANTERN FESTIVAL/YUANXIAOJIE/TENG CHIEH Chinese</b>  The Lantern Festival marks the first full moon of the year and the lengthening of the days. Strings of lanterns in various designs are hung up indoors and outside as decoration.</p>

☸	<p><b>PARINIRVANA Buddhist</b> Mahayanists mark the final passing away from this world of Gautama Buddha at Kushinagara, India, at the age of 80. Pure Land Buddhists call this Nirvana Day.</p>
☸	<p><b>MAGHA PUJA Buddhist</b> 1,250 enlightened disciples came to the Bamboo Grove on the full moon of <i>Magha</i>. The Buddha predicted his death and gave a summary of his teachings and a code of discipline which all monks are expected to recite every fortnight. The day is observed with meditation, chanting and listening to sermons.</p>
☆	<p><b>TU B'SHEVAT Jewish</b> A popular minor festival which celebrates the New Year for trees. Jewish tradition marks the 15th of Shevat as the day when the sap in the trees begins to rise, heralding the beginning of spring. It is customary for Jews all over the world to plant young trees at this time and to eat fruit produced in Israel.</p>
ॐ	<p><b>MAHASHIVRATRI [Great Shiva Night] Hindu</b> This is the night on which Shiva is said to perform the cosmic dance, leading from creation to destruction. Many Hindus fast at this time. All-night prayers focus on Shiva and his shines and statues. Milk is poured on his symbol, the <i>lingam</i>.</p>
†	<p><b>SHROVE TUESDAY Christian (Western Churches) [depends on dates for Easter]</b> 'Shrove' relates to absolution from sin. Nowadays it is a day for eating and enjoyment. In Britain it is called 'Pancake Day', as pancakes use up all the rich foods before Lent. Elsewhere it is known as <i>Mardi Gras</i> (Fat Tuesday), and is a time for carnivals and fairs.</p>
†	<p><b>ASH WEDNESDAY Christian (Western Churches) [depends on dates for Easter]</b> This first day of Lent recalls the temptations Jesus faced for forty days in the wilderness. In Catholic and some Anglican churches, worshipper's foreheads are marked with a cross of ash made from burning the palm crosses of the previous year – hence 'Ash Wednesday'. It leads to a period of a period of forty days fasting and self-discipline (not counting Sundays) that leads up to Easter. Traditionally Christians give up something during this time to mark the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness. Many Christians feel it is a time for study groups, prayer and Bible reading.</p>

## MARCH

†	<p><b>ST DAVID'S DAY Christian / National</b> Anniversary of the death of St David, the 6th Century CE patron saint of Wales.</p>
†	<p><b>FIRST DAY OF LENT / THE GREAT FAST Christian (Orthodox) [depends on dates for Easter]</b> This is the beginning of the Lenten Fast, which involves abstinence from meat, fish and dairy products until Easter. Unlike the Western tradition, where Lent begins on the Wednesday before the first Sunday of Lent, Eastern Churches start Lent on the Monday before the first Sunday.</p>
𑌒	<p><b>HINAMATSURI / DOLLS 'FESTIVAL / GIRLS 'DAY Japanese</b> Clay dolls representing the Emperor and Empress, are displayed in the home, and offerings of peach blossom, rice-wine and rice-cakes are placed before them. The dolls carry away any illness which is afflicting the daughters of the house, for whom prayers are offered.</p>
†	<p><b>THE WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER Christian</b> This international, interdenominational prayer movement was begun in 1887. The service material is produced by a different country each year.</p>
☆	<p><b>PURIM Jewish</b> Purim is a carnival festival, recalling the saving of the Jewish community of Persia, as retold in the Book of Esther (the <i>Megillah</i>), which is read through twice in each synagogue. The name of Haman is drowned out with rattles and hooters and boos by the congregation whenever it is read.</p>
ॐ	<p><b>HOLI / Hindu</b> A spring festival lasting one to five days. Bonfires are lit and coloured powders and dyes are thrown</p>

	over people. Various stories of Vishnu and of Krishna and the <i>gopis</i> (milkmaids) are related throughout the festival.
☉	<b>HOLA MAHALLA/HOLA MOHALLA Sikh</b> In 1680 Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Sikh Guru, introduced this festival at Anandpur in Punjab, India, on the day after the Hindu Holi. It includes displays of swordsmanship, horsemanship, archery and wrestling, together with displays of weapons and symposia of poetry, making it a lively and colourful occasion, particularly for young Sikhs.
☼	<b>FRAVARDIGAN/MUKTAD Zoroastrian (Iranian)</b> In the Fravardigan 10-day festival the immortal souls, together with their <i>fravashis</i> (the guardian spirits of departed ancestors, half man/half bird), come to reside in the place of worship. Many Zoroastrians take time off to pray, recite the five <i>Gathas</i> and cleanse their houses. Daily samples of sacred food are tasted by them during the daily ceremonies.
✝	<b>ST PATRICK'S DAY Christian / National</b> The patron saint of Ireland, who lived in Britain in the 4th century CE, became a priest and set out to evangelise the Irish. His symbol is the shamrock, sprigs of which are worn on this day. Parades are held in Dublin and elsewhere, often of a secular nature.
☾	<b>HIGAN / SHUNBUN NO HI Japanese</b> Marks the Spring equinox. As at the Autumn equinox, harmony and balance are the themes. Sutras are recited, and the graves of relatives are visited.
✝	<b>ST JOSEPH'S DAY, HUSBAND OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY Christian</b> A day to honour Joseph, who, along with Mary, was responsible for Jesus 'upbringing.
☉	<b>SPRING EQUINOX (OSTARA) Pagan VERNAL EQUINOX (Alban Eiler or Alban Eilir) Druid</b> By the Spring Equinox, the powers of the gathering year are equal to the darkness of winter and death. The God (the Green Man) awakens during this season. Some dedicate this time to Eostre, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of fertility.
☼	<b>NAW-RUZ Baha'i</b> New Year's Day and the end of the nineteen day fast that concludes the old year.
☼	<b>JAMSHEDI NORUZ Zoroastrian (Iranian)</b> NoRuz (New Year's Day) occurs on the first day of spring. It represents the resurgence of life and the symbolic victory of the forces of light over darkness. New clothes are worn and gifts and prayers offered at the Fire Temple to seek blessings from Ahura Mazda, and to participate in a <i>jashan</i> or thanksgiving ceremony, followed by dancing and making merry.
✝	<b>MOTHERING SUNDAY (Simnel Sunday) Christian</b> This is more popularly known as Mother's Day. Traditionally, Christians visited their 'mother church' and took gifts to their mothers, which often included a <i>simnel</i> cake.
☾	<b>THE PROPHET'S NIGHT JOURNEY and ASCENT / LAILAT UL ISRA WA-L-MIRAJ Muslim</b> This marks the night journey of the Prophet Muhammad through the heavens to the presence of God, when the command that Muslims should pray five times a day was given to the Prophet. The rock from which the Prophet ascended is now in Jerusalem's 'Dome of the Rock'. Muslims mark this night by reading the <i>Qur'an</i> and saying additional prayers.
☼	<b>AVA MAH PARAB (ABAN JASHAN) Zoroastrian (Shahenshahi - Parsi)</b> Ava is the guardian/protector of the waters, and is associated with fertility. Zoroastrians celebrate the birth of the waters by going to seas, rivers and streams to recite a litany to the waters, to which they offer flowers, sugar, coconuts and flat cakes of sweet lentils.
✝	<b>THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD / LADY DAY Christian (Anglican / Roman Catholic)</b> Celebrates the announcement to Mary by the angel Gabriel that she is to bear a child, and her response in the Magnificat.
☼	<b>KHORDAD SAL Zoroastrian (Iranian)</b> On the birthday of Prophet Zarathushtra there are visits to the Fire Temple to give thanks to Ahura Mazda for his gift of the Prophet; to participate in a <i>jashan</i> or thanksgiving ceremony; to listen to

	stories of the miraculous birth and life of the Prophet; and to share in a happy community meal, a drink and a dance.
†	<b>PASSION SUNDAY Christian</b> This is the 5th Sunday in Lent, when Christians begin to concentrate their thoughts on the Passion or suffering of Jesus.
<b>APRIL</b>	
ॐ	<b>RAMA NAVAMI Hindu</b> The birthday of Rama, the seventh avatar of Vishnu, is celebrated at noon in the aarti ceremony, performed in front of a doll or of a picture depicting Rama swinging in a cradle.
🌕	<b>FESTIVAL OF PURE BRIGHTNESS/TOMB SWEEPING DAY / QINGMINGJIE / CH'ING MING/ Chinese</b> The first occasion in the year when family graves are visited. Many families cleanse and sweep them, offer food to the spirits, and picnic/feast by the grave with their ancestors.
†	<b>PALM SUNDAY / HOLY WEEK Christian</b> First day of Holy Week, when Christians remember Jesus 'triumphal entry into Jerusalem. In many churches the entry is commemorated by processions, with the congregation carrying symbolic branches of trees, or palm leaves folded in the form of a cross.
🙏	<b>MAHAVIRA JAYANTI (599 BCE) Jain</b> The birthday of the last Tirthankara, or great teacher and model of the Jainas. His birth and the events surrounding it are re-enacted. Monks or nuns read from the scriptures and teach about the rest of Mahavira's life. Lay people then return home to a celebratory feast.
🌸	<b>HANAMATSURI Buddhist (Japanese)</b> Mahayana flower festival to celebrate the Buddha Shakyamuni's birthday. Shrines are erected and an image of the infant Buddha is bathed. Theravadins celebrate Buddha's birth, enlightenment and passing away later in the year, at the full moon in May.
ॐ	<b>HANUMAN JAYANTI Hindu</b> This Hindu festival recalls the birth of Lord Rama's supreme devotee, the monkey-headed Hanuman, whose feats figure in the Ramayana epic. Hanuman's birth is celebrated at sunrise on the full-moon day of the lunar month of Chaitra.
☾	<b>THE NIGHT OF FORGIVENESS / LAILAT-UL-BARA'AH Muslim and BIRTHDAY of 12th IMAM, Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Mahdi (Shi'a)</b> Muslims seek forgiveness for their sins at this time. Many hold that on this night a person's destiny is fixed by Allah for the coming year. The night is spent in prayer, asking for forgiveness and God's guidance. Some fast during the daytime in preparation. In certain parts of the world Muslims visit the graves of relatives, and the giving of charity is also traditional. In many places the night is marked with firework displays.
★	<b>PASSOVER / PESACH Jewish</b> An eight day festival when Jews commemorate the Exodus from their slavery in Egypt. The <i>Seder</i> meal is held in each family's home at the beginning of the festival, when the story of their deliverance is recounted. <i>Matzah</i> (unleavened bread) is eaten throughout the festival.
†	<b>MAUNDY THURSDAY Christian (Western Churches)</b> Christians remember the Last Supper when Jesus blessed bread and wine and commanded his disciples to remember him whenever they did this. The name ' <i>maundy</i> ' comes from a Latin term ' <i>mandatum</i> ' ('commandment'), signifying Jesus' new commandment to his disciples, as recorded in John 15:17.
†	<b>GOOD FRIDAY Christian (Western Churches) [subject to Easter dates]</b> This day commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus. Meditative services are held in church to mark the time that Jesus spent on the cross.

†	<p><b>HOLY SATURDAY (Easter Eve) Christian [subject to Easter dates]</b>  This is the last day of Lent. Special services involving the lighting of the <i>Paschal</i> Candle and the renewal of baptismal vows take place in the evening in preparation for Easter.</p>
†	<p><b>EASTER DAY Christian (Western Churches) [subject to Easter dates]</b>  Easter Day is the most important festival of the Christian year, as it is when Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. Many Easter traditions, such as the giving of chocolate Easter eggs symbolise the gift of new life.  Matthew 28:1-11, Mark 16:1-10, Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-10.</p> <p><b>PASCHA/EASTER Christian (Orthodox) (Rastafarian)</b>  Easter Day, the most important festival of the Christian year, is when Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. A vigil is kept during the preceding night and the resurrection is greeted with the lighting of candles and the glad affirmation, 'Christ is risen'.</p>
☸	<p><b>SONGKRAN Buddhist</b>  Traditional New Year's Day festival in Thailand. Containers of water are thrown as a symbol of washing away all that is evil. Fragrant herbs are often placed in the water jug or bucket.</p>
☸	<p><b>VAISAKHI/BAISAKHI – Sikh</b>  In 1699, on Vaisakhi, the tenth Guru, Gobind Singh, founded the Order of the <i>Khalsa</i>. Five men (Five Beloved Ones), offered their lives when the Guru asked for volunteers. The 'Five Ks', the outward signs of Sikhism, were made obligatory and Sikh men took the name '<i>Singh</i>' (lion) and women '<i>Kaur</i>' (princess). The initiation ceremony, <i>amrit</i>, was introduced.</p>
☸	<p><b>RIDVAN Baha'i</b>  The most important Baha'i festival. In these 12 days, in the garden outside Baghdad after which the festival is named, Baha'u'llah declared himself the Promised One, prophesied by the <i>Bab</i>. The first, ninth and twelfth days are especially significant and are holy days, when no work is done. It is during this period that Baha'is elect all their governing bodies.</p>
✳	<p><b>YOM HA-SHOAH (Holocaust Day) Jewish</b>  A day of remembrance for the victims of the Nazi Holocaust. Memorial candles are lit and special services are held.</p>
✶	<p><b>ADAR MAH PARAB Zoroastrian (Shenshai - Parsi)</b>  On the ninth day of Adar, the 9th month, Zoroastrians celebrate the birthday of fire. They pay visits to the fire temple to make offerings of sandalwood or incense, and to thank the holy fire for the warmth and light it has given throughout the year. Traditionally on this day food is not cooked in the house as the fire is given a rest and the <i>Atash Niyayeesh</i> or litany to the fire is recited in honour of the house fire or the ceremonial oil lamp.</p>
†	<p><b>ST GEORGE'S DAY National</b>  St George is the patron saint of England. He lived and died in the Middle East, but his popularity grew after the Crusades, when his red cross on a white background became the symbol of the English Crusaders.</p>
✳	<p><b>YOM HA'ATZMA'UT Jewish</b>  Israeli Independence Day, commemorating the declaration of independence of Israel in 1948.</p>
	<p><b>RAMADAN Muslim - APRIL / MAY</b>  Ramadan is the 9th month of the Islamic Calendar, when the Prophet received the first revelation of verses of the Qur'an. It is the holiest month for Muslims, and they dedicate themselves to spiritual renewal, prayer and intensive devotional reading of the Qur'an. During the month of Ramadan Muslims are required to fast from daybreak until after sunset. No food or drink may be consumed during the hours of fasting, and those fasting must also abstain from smoking and from sexual relations. After the custom of the Prophet, the fast is traditionally broken each evening by taking dates and water.</p>
<b>MAY</b>	
☸	<p><b>BELTAINE/MAY EVE Wiccan / Pagan</b>  The wheel of the year continues to turn and fertile spring yields to the height of summer. Many pagans celebrate Beltaine by lighting fires and leaping over them, and/or with maypole dances, symbolizing the mystery of the Sacred Marriage of Goddess and God.</p>

☸	<p><b>VESAKHA PUJA / WESAK / BUDDHA DAY Buddhist</b> Wesak is the biggest of Buddhist festivals. Theravadins celebrate the birth, enlightenment and final passing away of Gautama Buddha. Mahayanists have separate days for each of them, and on <i>Bodhi</i> Day celebrate the enlightenment of the Buddha. Houses are decorated with lanterns and garlands, and temples are ringed with little oil lamps. People often send 'Wesak cards' to their friends, and lay people come together at monasteries at this time.</p>
†	<p><b>CHRISTIAN AID WEEK Christian</b> Initiated in 1945, this fund raising week raises money for work with the needy throughout the world; mainly done by house to house collections and sales of goods of various kinds.</p>
✳	<p><b>LAG B'OMER Jewish</b> The <i>Omer lasts</i> 49 days from Pesach to Shavuot. A time of sadness, it is relieved on the 33rd day. It recalls the end of a plague in Roman times. Weddings often take place on this day, since they are not usually permitted during the rest of the <i>Omer period</i>.</p>
☾	<p><b>LAILAT-UL-QADR THE NIGHT OF POWER</b> This commemorates the night in 610 CE when the Prophet Muhammad received his first visit from the angel Jibril (Gabriel) and his revelation of the Qur'an. Muslims believe that the date of this night is kept secret by God, but that they 'may seek the Night of Dignity in the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadan '(Bukhaari, quoting Aisha, who heard it from the Prophet).</p>
†	<p><b>ASCENSION DAY (40th day after Easter) Christian</b> This day commemorates the last earthly appearance of the Risen Christ, who, according to Christian belief, ascended into heaven in the presence of many witnesses.</p>
☸	<p><b>ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION OF THE BAB Baha'i</b> The <i>Bab</i> heralded the arrival of Baha'ullah and was co-founder of the Baha'i faith. He first declared his mission in Persia in 1844. He inaugurated the Baha'i calendar which numbers itself from the year of this declaration.</p>
☽	<p><b>ZARATOSHT NO DISO Zoroastrian (Shahenshahi; Parsi) [December (Tuesday) (Iranian)]</b> This is the death anniversary of the Prophet Zarathushtra. Tradition records he was assassinated at the age of 77. It is customary to visit the Fire Temple, and ponder upon the <i>Gathas</i>, the Hymns of Zarathushtra, which embody his eternal message to humanity.</p>
☾	<p><b>EID-UL-FITR/FEAST OF FAST BREAKING (1st Shawwal) Muslim</b> This is a time - once the fast of Ramadan has been completed - for making gifts to the poor. It is especially a time for new clothes, good food, and presents for children. Families get together and contact friends, especially those who live far away. The community assembles for Eid prayer and a sermon at its mosques. The traditional greeting is 'Eid Mubarak' – 'a happy and blessed Eid'.</p>
☸	<p><b>ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASCENSION OF BAHU'LLAH Baha'i</b> Commemorates the death of Baha'u'llah at Bahji, near Acre, in 1892. His shrine there has become the place towards which all Baha'is face when praying.</p>
✳	<p><b>SHAVUOT / THE FEAST OF WEEKS / PENTECOST</b> Seven weeks after Pesach, Shavuot celebrates the revelation of the Torah on Mount Sinai and the early harvest season in Israel. Summer flowers and dairy foods abound.</p>
†	<p><b>PENTECOST / WHIT SUNDAY Christian (Western Churches)</b> Pentecost, named after the Jewish festival when the disciples of Jesus first proclaimed the Gospel after the gift of the Holy Spirit, is seen as the 'birthday' of the Church. Its alternative name comes from the custom of baptizing converts dressed in white.</p>
<b>JUNE</b>	
†	<p><b>TRINITY SUNDAY Christian (Western Churches)</b> On Trinity Sunday, Christians reflect on the mystery of God, who is seen as One but is understood in and through God, the Father, God, the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit.</p>

✝	<p><b>PENTECOST Christian (Orthodox Churches)</b> An important festival in the Christian year, Pentecost is often seen as the 'birthday' of the Church, since this is when the disciples of Jesus first proclaimed the Gospel after receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is named after the Jewish festival day on which this event happened.</p>
✝	<p><b>DAY OF THANKSGIVING for the institution of Holy Communion Christian (Anglican). CORPUS CHRISTI (The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ) Christian (Roman Catholic) - a popular festival to celebrate the institution of the Mass/Eucharist.</b></p>
☸	<p><b>MARTYRDOM OF GURU ARJAN (1606) Sikh</b> The fifth Guru was executed on the orders of the Moghul Emperor, Jehangir, for refusing to pay a fine arising from a charge of treason. Guru Arjan made the first compilation of the Sikh Scriptures, called the <i>Adi Granth</i>, and supervised the completion of what is now the Golden Temple in Amritsar. A <i>gurpurb</i> is held on this day, including an <i>akhand path</i>.</p>
☉	<p><b>MIDSUMMER SOLSTICE Wiccan / Pagan - SUMMER SOLSTICE (Alban Heruin or Alban Hefin) Druid</b> The summer solstice is the festival of Midsummer, sometimes called Litha. The light of the sun is at the height of its power. It is a time of plenty and celebration.</p>
🏠	<p><b>WORLD HUMANIST DAY National</b> This Humanist holiday is celebrated annually around the world on the June solstice. It is seen as a time for Humanists to gather socially to promote the positive values of Humanism. Methods of celebration are left to individuals, but some groups develop intricate social rituals, music, and proceedings which highlight the celebration.</p>
☸	<p><b>RATHA YATRA Hindu</b> 'Chariot journey'. This is observed most notably at Puri in the Indian state of Orissa, where processions of thousands of devotees pull huge waggons (<i>rathas</i>) supporting images of Krishna. He is known under the name of 'Jagannath', (Lord of the Universe), from which the English term 'juggernaut' comes. Krishna is attended on his journey by his brother and sister. The festival and others like it are celebrated in Britain with processions through various parts of London on appropriate Sundays.</p>
🏠	<p><b>MIDSUMMER DAY National</b> One of the four Quarter Days in the UK legal calendar.</p>
🐉	<p><b>DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL / DUANWUJIE / TUAN YANG CHIEH Chinese</b> Great dragon boat races take place between slim rowing boats (sometimes 100 feet long) shaped like dragons. People also go down to the rivers to picnic and celebrate on boats.</p>

## JULY

☸	<p><b>JASHN-E TIRGAN (TIR JASHAN) Zoroastrian (Iranian)</b> Jashn-e Tirgan is an ancient summer festival, celebrated some three months after the spring NoRuz. Tirgan is devoted to the divinity Tir and is associated with the dog-star Sirius, the coming of the rains in Iran and the fertility they bring. On this day it is customary to visit the Fire Temple to give thanks to Ahura Mazda, and to participate in a <i>jashan</i> or thanksgiving ceremony.</p>
☸	<p><b>ASALHA PUJA or DHAMMA DAY Buddhist</b> Dhammacakka day '<i>–The turning of the wheel of teaching</i>'. A Theravada celebration of the First Proclamation by Gautama to five ascetics in the Deer Park near Benares. In it he taught the Middle Way, the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths.</p>
☸	<p><b>FRAVARDIGAN Zoroastrian (Kadmi)</b> In the Fravardigan festival the immortal souls, together with their <i>fravashis</i> (the guardian spirits of departed ancestors, half man/half bird), come to reside in the place of worship. Many Zoroastrians take time off to pray, recite the five <i>Gathas</i> and cleanse their houses. Daily samples of sacred food are tasted by them during the daily ceremonies.</p>
🏠	<p><b>O-BON Japanese [not Tokyo]</b> A Japanese festival when the spirits of the departed are welcomed back home with feasting and dancing. Fires are often lit to illuminate their arrival and departure.</p>

	<p><b>NAVROZE / NO RUZ Zoroastrian (Kadmi)</b>  New Year's Day on the Shenshai Calendar. By the twentieth century the Parsis of India had become the largest group in the world practising Zoroastrianism, and in the twenty first century over 95% of Zoroastrians in the UK are Parsis. Like their Indian counterparts, they celebrate two new years – giving more time for making merry!</p>
	<p><b>ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARTYRDOM OF THE BAB - 1850 - Baha'i</b>  The <i>Bab</i> was executed by firing squad in Tabriz, Persia, at noon on this day. The <i>Bab</i>'s death is commemorated at noon with readings and prayers from the Baha'i Scriptures.</p>
	<p><b>DHUL-HIJJAH Muslim</b>  For Muslims the first 10 days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah are held to be especially holy when good deeds are particularly rewarded by God. These days encompass the allotted days for the performance of the Hajj (pilgrimage) and the first day of Eid-ul-Adha (the feast of sacrifice).</p>
	<p><b>KHORDAD SAL Zoroastrian (Kadmi)</b>  Khordad Sal is the Birthday of Zarathushtra and falls on the sixth day after NoRuz. <i>Khordad</i> means perfection and the festival of Khordad Sal symbolically celebrates the birthday of Prophet Zarathushtra. It is customary on this day to visit the Fire Temple, to give thanks to Ahura Mazda for giving humanity the Prophet Zarathushtra, to participate in a <i>jashan</i> or thanksgiving ceremony, to listen to stories of the miraculous birth and life of Prophet Zarathushtra, and to share in a happy community meal, a drink and a dance.</p>
	<p><b>BIRTHDAY OF HAILE SELASSIE I Rastafarian</b>  One of the holiest days of the Rastafarian year. It is celebrated with <i>Nyahbinghi</i> drumming, hymns and prayers.</p>
	<p><b>CHOKOR (also CHO KOR DU CHEN) Buddhist</b>  This Tibetan/Nepalese festival commemorates the first teaching (<i>the turning of the wheel of law</i>) given by the historical Buddha. It is a colourful and relaxed mid-summer festival in which statues of the Buddha and copies of the scriptures, engraved on narrow, rectangular wooden blocks, are carried round the district with music and jollity, symbolising the promulgation of the Buddha's teaching. The whole community, clerical and lay, male and female, joins in the processions and the picnics that follow.</p>
	<p><b>HAJJ / PILGRIMAGE TO MAKKAH (8th to 12th Dhul-Hijjah) Muslim</b>  All Muslims who can afford to do so, and are not prevented through ill-health, are required to make this pilgrimage once in their lifetime (although there is no prohibition on making the pilgrimage more than once). A series of ritual acts are performed by the pilgrims during the first two days of Hajj.</p>
	<p><b>YAUM-ARAFAH / THE DAY OF ARAFAT (9th Dhul-Hijjah) Muslim</b>  Muslims who are on Hajj spend the day in prayer on Mount Arafat to commemorate the end of the revelation of the Qur'an to the Prophet. Those not on Hajj are also expected to pray and to fast.</p>
	<p><b>TISHA B'AV Jewish</b>  Full day fast mourning the destruction of the first and second Temples in Jerusalem and other tragedies in Jewish history. The Book of Lamentations is read.</p>
	<p><b>EID-UL-ADHA / THE FESTIVAL OF SACRIFICE (10th Dhul-Hijjah) Muslim</b>  This major festival (al-Eid al-Kabir) commemorates Ibrahim's (Abraham's) willingness to sacrifice his son, Ismail. Muslims all over the world sacrifice an animal if they can afford it. Much of the meat is distributed to the poor, and some is shared with relatives and friends.</p>
<b>AUGUST</b>	
	<p><b>LAMMAS/LUGHNASADH Wiccan LUGHNASADH Pagan</b>  Lughnasadh, otherwise called <i>Lammas</i>, is the time of the corn harvest, when Pagans reap those things they have sown and when they celebrate the fruits of the mystery of Nature. At Lughnasadh, Pagans give thanks for the bounty of the Goddess as Queen of the Land.</p>
	<p><b>RAKSHA BANDHAN Hindu</b>  <i>Raksha</i> means 'protection' and <i>bandhan</i> means 'to tie'. Girls and married women in families of a north Indian background tie a <i>rakhi</i> (amulet) on the right wrists of their brothers, wishing them protection from evil influences of various kinds.</p>

	<p><b>THE TRANSFIGURATION Christian</b>  This festival commemorates the occasion when Jesus went up a mountain with three of his disciples, Peter, James and John, who saw his face change and his clothes become dazzling white. They witnessed him in conversation with Moses and Elijah, and heard a voice saying, 'This is my own dear Son with whom I am pleased – listen to him'. For many Christians this confirms the divine nature of Jesus.</p>
	<p><b>FRAVARDIGAN/MUKTAD Zoroastrian (Shahenshahi-Parsi)</b>  In the Fravardigan festival the immortal souls, together with their <i>fravashis</i> (the guardian spirits of departed ancestors, half man/half bird), come to reside in the place of worship. Many Zoroastrians take time off to pray, recite the five <i>Gathas</i> and cleanse their houses. Daily samples of sacred food are tasted by them during the daily ceremonies.</p>
	<p><b>THE FESTIVAL OF THE POOL / EID UL GHADEER Muslim (Shi'a)</b>  This is a festival observed by Shi'a Muslims, for whom it is an extremely important day. It commemorates an event shortly before the death of the Prophet and his announcement concerning Ali, which they understand to be his clear appointment to be successor to the prophet as the spiritual and temporal leader of Islam.</p>
	<p><b>JANMASHTAMI / KRISHNA JAYANTI Hindu</b>  Birthday of Krishna. Many <i>Hindus</i> fast till midnight, the time of Krishna's birth. Those unable to fast will have some fruit and milk. In the temples Krishna is welcomed with singing, dancing and sweets. In some homes and temples an image of the new-born Krishna is put in a cradle. Krishna is a very popular avatar or incarnation of Vishnu and this festival is celebrated widely.</p>
	<p><b>10-BON Japanese</b> [in Tokyo - for rest of Japan in July]  A Japanese festival when the spirits of the departed are welcomed back home with feasting and dancing. Fires are often lit to illuminate their arrival and departure.</p>
	<p><b>ASSUMPTION (DORMITION) OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY Christian (Roman Catholic)</b>  This celebrates the 'taking up' of Mary, body and soul, to heaven. Many Catholic communities mark the festival of the Assumption with processions and fêtes.</p>
	<p><b>ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY Christian (Anglican) &amp; THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD Christian (Eastern Orthodox, Julian Calendar)</b>  On this day, Eastern Orthodox Christians commemorate the passing of Mary, Mother of Christ, in the presence of the Apostles. The apostles buried Mary at Gethsemane, where Jesus had also been buried; but on the third day after the burial, when they were eating together, Mary appeared to them, saying "Rejoice". When the apostles went to the grave, her body was gone, leaving a sweet fragrance. This event conveys the idea of death as 'falling asleep' (this is what 'dormition' means), to be followed by eventual resurrection.</p>
	<p><b>NAVROZE / NO RUZ Zoroastrian (Shenshai-Parsi)</b>  New Year's Day on the Shenshai Calendar. By the twentieth century the Parsis of India had become the largest group in the world practising Zoroastrianism, and in the twenty first century over 95% of Zoroastrians in the UK are Parsis. Like their Indian counterparts, they celebrate two new years – giving more time for making merry!</p>
	<p><b>PARYUSHAN PARVA BEGINS Jain</b>  These are eight days of purification, devoted to study, prayer, meditation and fasting, and ending with a period of confession and forgiveness. Often monks will be invited to give teachings from the Jain scriptures. Paryushana means 'to stay in one place', which signifies a time of reflection and repentance. Originally the practice was monastic for the most part.</p>
	<p><b>KHORDAD SAL Zoroastrian (Shahenshahi) [26 March (Monday) Zoroastrian (Iranian)]</b>  Khordad Sal is the Birthday of Zarathushtra and falls on the sixth day after NoRuz. <i>Khordad</i> means perfection and the festival of Khordad Sal symbolically celebrates the birthday of Prophet Zarathushtra. It is customary on this day to visit the Fire Temple, to give thanks to Ahura Mazda for giving humanity the Prophet Zarathushtra, to participate in a <i>jashan</i> or thanksgiving ceremony, to listen to stories of the miraculous birth and life of Prophet Zarathushtra, and to share in a happy community meal, a drink and a dance.</p>
	<p><b>ISLAMIC NEW YEAR 1441 / AL-HIJRA / RA'S UL 'AM (Muharram 1) Muslim</b>  This day commemorates the Hijra or migration of the Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Medina in</p>

	622 CE, which led to the establishment of the Muslim community there. The day is not universally celebrated amongst Sunni Muslims but is notable as Muslim years are dated from this time and are marked AH (After the Hijrah). In 2018 CE the Muslim year 1440 AH begins.
	<b>GANESH CHATURTHI Birthday of Ganesh Hindu</b> This is a Hindu festival in honour of Ganesh, the god of good fortune and new beginnings. He was the elephant headed son of Lord Shiva and Parvati, and is often referred to as Ganupati. Celebrations conclude with the immersion in water of the image of Ganesh.
	<b>SAMVATSARI Jain</b> (International Forgiveness Day for Jains), is the last day of Paryushana. It is the holiest day of the Jain calendar. Many Jains observe a complete fast on this day. The whole day is spent in prayers and contemplation.
	<b>HERD BOY AND WEAVING MAID FESTIVAL/QIXIJE/CH'I HOU CHIEH Chinese</b> This Double Seven festival perpetuates an ancient folk tale of two stars, one on either side of the Heavenly River (the Milky Way). They are held to have been a herd boy and a heavenly weaving maid who had married but were separated when she returned to heaven. The lovers are allowed a reunion on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month when a flock of magpies form a bridge across the Heavenly River.
	<b>ASHURA Muslim</b> For Sunni Muslims Ashura is a minor fast observed by the Prophet. Shi'a Muslims recall a great tragedy that took place in AH 61 (680 CE). The Imam Husayn (son of Ali and Fatimah and therefore grandson of the Prophet) was attacked and killed at Karbala (now in Iraq) along with his family and followers by the troops of the Caliph Yazid.
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	
	<b>HARVEST FESTIVAL Christian (Western, Anglican and Free Churches)</b> Displays of various foods are made in churches and Sunday schools and services are held to give thanks for the goodness of God's gifts in nature.
	<b>INSTALLATION OF THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB IN THE HARMANDIR SAHIB The Golden Temple, Amritsar 1604 CE - Sikh</b> The Sikhs 'fifth Guru, Arjan Dev, installed the volume of scripture, the Adi Granth, on this date. It consisted of the hymns of the first five Gurus plus those of other 'saint-poets'. Hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur were later added to form the present Guru Granth Sahib.
	<b>FESTIVAL OF HUNGRY GHOSTS/ ZHONGQIUJIE / CHUNG CH'IU Chinese</b> Chinese Buddhist and ancestral festival, when paper objects for use in the spirit world are made and offered to aid those spirits who have no resting place or descendants. Large paper boats are made and burnt at temples to help spirits cross the sea of torment to Nirvana.
	<b>FRAVARDIN MAH PARAB Zoroastrian (Shahenshahi; Parsi)</b> At Fravardin Zoroastrians visit the Towers of Silence in India (or in the UK the Zoroastrian Cemetery in Brookwood, Surrey) to participate in a <i>jashan</i> ceremony in memory of the departed <i>fravashis</i> (guardian spirits and souls of the community). Sacred food is prepared as an offering to the departed during the <i>jashan</i> and is later shared by the participants.
	<b>ETHIOPIAN NEW YEAR'S DAY Rastafarian</b> Rastafarians have a four year cycle, in which each year is named after one of the evangelists.
	<b>ROSH HASHANNAH Jewish</b> 5779 years from the creation of the world, this festival begins ten days of self examination. The ram's horn ( <i>shofar</i> ) blown in the synagogue recalls Abraham's sacrifice of a ram instead of his son, Isaac. Apples dipped in honey are eaten in the hope of a 'sweet 'new year. The greeting is ' <i>Leshanah Tovah Tikatev</i> (may you be inscribed for a good year).
	<b>HIGAN / SHUBUN NO HI Japanese</b> Marks the autumn equinox. As at the spring equinox, harmony and balance are the themes; sutras are recited and the graves of relatives are visited.

	<b>AUTUMN EQUINOX (MABON) Wiccan Pagan / JALBAN ELUED or ALBAN ELFED - Druid</b> Day and night stand hand in hand as equals. As the shadows lengthen, Pagans see the darker faces of the God and Goddess. For many Pagans, this rite honours old age and the approach of Winter
	<b>YOM KIPPUR Jewish</b> The last of the ten days of repentance, this 'Sabbath of Sabbaths' is the holiest day of the Jewish year. It is marked by 'afflicting the soul –' expressed through a total fast 25 hours long. Jews spend the eve and most of the day in prayer, asking for forgiveness for past wrongs and resolving to improve in the future. The Book of Jonah is read.
<b>OCTOBER</b>	
	<b>JASHN-E MEHERGAN (or MIHR JASHAN) Zoroastrian (Iranian)</b> The festival of Mehergan is dedicated to the divinity Meher or Mithra, who is associated with the sun and with justice. Thanks are offered at the fire temple and the community shares in a meal that includes dry fruits and nuts, along with a drink, dancing and merrymaking.
	<b>RABBIT IN THE MOON FESTIVAL / ZHONGQIUJIE / CHUNG CH'IU Chinese</b> This Mid-Autumn festival celebrates the moon's birthday. Offerings are made to the rabbit in the moon, who is pounding the elixir of life with a pestle. 'Spirit money' is brought along with incense and offered to the moon by women, who also make special 'moon' cakes containing ground lotus and sesame seeds or dates.
	<b>PAVARANA DAY Buddhist</b> The last day of the Rains Retreat (the <i>Vassa</i> ) is known as <i>Pavarana</i> Day or 'Leaving the <i>Vassa</i> '. <i>Pavarana</i> means 'to invite' and on this day monks who have completed the Retreat invite their fellows to admonish them for any failings. It is also known as ' <i>Sangha</i> Day'.
	<b>GANDHI JAYANTI Hindu</b> Gandhi Jayanti is an Indian national holiday that celebrates the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, who is referred to as the 'Father of the Nation'. He was the driving force behind the foundation of the state of India. His birthday is celebrated with services, prayers and painting and essay contests, using topics that glorify peace and non-violence, and the singing of Gandhi's favourite devotional song entitled 'Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram' (Ram Dhun for short).
	<b>SUKKOT Jewish</b> This harvest festival recalls the 40 years the Jews spent in the wilderness on the way from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. A temporary hut or booth – called a <i>sukkah</i> – is used for eating meals and for visits and socialising. The roof, which has to be open in part to the elements, is covered with branches and decorated with fruit.
	<b>SIMCHAT TORAH Jewish</b> The annual reading of the <i>Torah</i> is completed on this day. The reading moves from the last words of Deuteronomy to the first ones of Genesis. All the <i>Torah</i> scrolls are paraded around the synagogue, while children dance and sing, as do many of the adults.
	<b>INTER FAITH WEEK OF PRAYER FOR WORLD PEACE</b> Prayers from the literature of several different world religions are published each year in a special leaflet. They are composed and used by many different religious communities.
	<b>NAVARATI Hindu / DURGA PUJA Hindu / DUSSEHRA / VIJAYA DASHAMIPUJA Hindu</b> Navaratri means 'nine nights', which is how long the festival lasts. In Northern India the performance of the Ram Lila during Navaratri commemorates Rama's victory over Ravana, the demon king of Sri Lanka. The day after the end of Navaratri is celebrated as the 'victorious tenth' (Vijaya Dashami) and huge figures of Ravana are filled with fireworks and burned on Ram Lila grounds (public areas). In the UK some temple congregations carry this out on a smaller scale. Elsewhere the goddess Durga is worshipped on the eighth day. Panjabis mark the day by giving food and other items to young girls.
	<b>ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF THE BAB Baha'i</b> The <i>Bab</i> (the title means 'Gate') called people to religious renewal and to await the coming of a messenger from God, believed to be Baha'u'llah (a title that means 'Glory of God').

	<p><b>ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF THE BAHA'U'LLAH Baha'i</b>          Founder of the Baha'i faith, he was born the eldest son of a Persian nobleman in Tehran, Persia, in 1817.</p>
	<p><b>CONFERRING OF GURUSHIP ON THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB Sikh</b>          In 1708 Guru Gobind Singh declared that, instead of having another human Guru, from now on Sikhs would regard the scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, as their Guru.</p>
	<p><b>CLIMB A HIGH MOUNTAIN / PICNIC IN A HIGH PLACE / CHONGYANGJIE / CH'UNG YANG Chinese</b>          This is the day for hill climbing or 'going up on a high place', where kites are flown, family graves visited, and a 'golden pig' is shared by large families with fruit, wine, tea and rice.</p>
	<p><b>THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S BIRTHDAY / MILAD UL NABI (12th Rabi'ul-Awwal) (Sunni) / THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S BIRTHDAY / MILAD UL NABI (17th Rabi'ul-Awwal) (Shi'a)</b>          Widely celebrated and a public holiday in many Muslim countries. Qur'anic readings and songs in praise of the Prophet feature. The exact date of the Prophet's birth is uncertain.</p>
	<p><b>ANAPANASATI DAY Buddhist</b>          The last day on which the Kathina may be held. On the final day of the three months long Rains Retreat, a Kathina robe is made of patches of cloth. It is presented to a particularly deserving or virtuous monk, in a ceremony conducted by four of his colleagues.</p>
	<p><b>SAMHAIN (pronounced Sow-in) Wiccan Pagan SAMHUINN Druid</b>          The Celtic wheel of the year turns and the veil between life and death is drawn aside. Samhain is the festival of death when Pagans remember and honour those who have gone before. Fires are lit and 'dead wood' is burned before stepping into the darkness of winter.          The wheel of the year is seen to begin at Samhain. Pagans celebrate death as part of life. This is not a time of fear, but a time to understand more deeply that life and death are part of a sacred whole.</p>
	<p><b>HALLOWE'EN Heathen</b>          Halloween / Hallowe'en is a holiday celebrated on the night of October 31. Traditional activities include trick-or-treating, bonfires, costume parties, visiting 'haunted houses', and carving jack-o-lanterns. Irish and Scottish immigrants carried versions of the tradition to North America in the nineteenth century. Other western countries embraced the holiday in the late twentieth century including Ireland, the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico and the United Kingdom as well as of Australia and New Zealand.</p>

## NOVEMBER

	<p><b>LOY KRATONG Buddhist</b>          Loy Kratong is celebrated in most of the village and town temples in Thailand and often coincides with a temple's Kathina Day. Degradable baskets are made and filled with carefully folded banana leaves, incense sticks, a candle and sometimes a coin. These are then launched on rivers, canals ponds or the sea, while a wish for good fortune is offered to the spirits of the water.</p>
	<p><b>ALL SAINTS 'DAY Christian (Western Churches)</b>          This day provides a chance to offer thanks for the work and witness of all saints, recognising that not all are known or specially celebrated. Many churches stress this day by holding events especially designed for children.</p>
	<p><b>ALL SOULS 'DAY Christian</b>          The departed are remembered on this day and prayers are offered on their behalf.</p>
	<p><b>ANNIVERSARY OF THE CROWNING OF HAILE SELASSIE I Rastafarian</b>          One of the holiest days of the Rastafarian year; it celebrates Haile Selassie's accession to the Ethiopian throne.</p>
	<p><b>REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY National</b>          The Sunday nearest to Armistice Day, devoted to remembering the dead of the two World wars and subsequent wars.</p>

	<p><b>INTER-FAITH WEEK</b> Held in the second week of November Inter-Faith week seeks to strengthen good inter-faith relations, increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities, and increase understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs.</p>
	<p><b>DIVALI / DIWALI / DEEPAVALI Hindu / Jain</b> For Hindus this is a New Year festival lasting from one to five days, during which fireworks are set off and lights are hung out. It is a festival of light, coinciding with the darkest night of the lunar month. It is generally associated with Lakshmi, goddess of wealth and prosperity, or with the victorious return of Rama and Sita after their exile. Divali marks the beginning of the Indian financial year.</p>
	<p><b>DIVALI / BANDI CHHOR DIVAS Sikh</b> Sikhs also celebrate Divali since Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru, was released from Gwalior prison on this day. The Golden Temple in Amritsar is illuminated and firework displays take place there. It is a time for new clothes, presents and sweets.</p>
	<p><b>SHICHI-GO-SAN (Seven-Five-Three) Japanese</b> Girls of seven, boys of five and girls of three are dressed up in new clothes and taken to a Shinto shrine to pray for their future well-being.</p>
	<p><b>MARTYRDOM OF GURU TEGH BAHADUR (1675) Sikh</b> Under orders from the Moghul emperor, the ninth Guru was executed in public opposite the Red Fort in Delhi, so sacrificing his head rather than his faith, on behalf of Kashmiri Hindus, who had turned to him for help.</p>
	<p><b>ADVENT SUNDAY Christian (Western Churches)</b> The start of the Christian year, four Sundays before Christmas. It is often celebrated by lighting the first candle in the advent crown – a circular wreath of greenery. A further three candles are lit on subsequent Sundays, culminating with the Christmas candle on the 25th December. This signifies the transition from darkness to light.</p>
	<p><b>BIRTHDAY OF GURU NANAK (1469 CE) Sikh</b> This is the birthday of Nanak, the first Sikh Guru. To celebrate it, Sikhs gather at the <i>gurdwara</i> to hear sermons and sing hymns about the life of the first Guru. The congregation will share a free meal (<i>langar</i>).</p>
	<p><b>ST ANDREW'S DAY National</b> The patron saint of Scotland since the 8th century. Andrew was an apostle and brother of St Peter. In the Anglican communion he is associated with missionary activity.</p>
<p><b>DECEMBER</b></p>	
	<p><b>BODHI DAY Buddhist</b> Some Buddhists (eg Pure Land followers) celebrate Gautama's attainment of Enlightenment on this day under the Bodhi tree in Bodhgaya, North India.</p>
	<p><b>IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY Christian (Roman Catholic)</b> This day celebrates the doctrine, held mainly by Roman Catholics, that Mary herself was born free from Original Sin, leaving her sinless for the conception and bearing of Jesus.</p>
	<p><b>HUMAN RIGHTS 'DAY (National)</b> In 1948 The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: 'All human beings are born with equal and inalienable rights and fundamental freedoms.'</p>
	<p><b>HANUKAH Jewish</b> Celebrates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after it was recaptured from the Syrian Greeks by the Maccabee brothers in 165 BCE. For the eight evenings of the festival, candles are lit from right to left in a <i>hanukkiyah</i>, a nine-branched <i>menorah</i> – one candle for each evening. The ninth candle is the <i>shamash</i> (the servant candle) from which the other candles are lit. Foods cooked with oil - such as doughnuts and <i>latkes</i> (potato cakes) – are traditional to remember the miracle with oil that happened at this time.</p>

	<p><b>WINTER SOLSTICE (Alban Arthan or Alban Arthuan) Druid / YULE (archaic form Geola, pronounced Yula) Wiccan / Pagan</b></p> <p>Yule is the time of the winter solstice, when the sun is reborn, an image of the return of all new life. Heathens celebrate Yule for twelve nights and days, starting the evening before the Winter Solstice (called Mother's night), when they think of their female ancestors and spiritual protectors. The night heralds the beginning of the major holiday in Heathenry.</p>
	<p><b>CHRISTMAS EVE Christian</b></p> <p>Evening carol services, crib services and Midnight Masses inaugurate the festival of Christmas. Santa Claus (from the Dutch <i>Sinter Klaus</i>) is a legendary figure, based on St Nicholas of Myra, and is supposed to bring presents to children on Christmas Eve.</p>
	<p><b>25 December (Friday) CHRISTMAS DAY Christian (see also 6/7 January 2020)</b></p> <p>Christmas Day celebrates the birth of Jesus, whom Christians believe to be the son of God. Gifts are given as reminders of the offerings brought to the infant Jesus, and Christmas carols, plays and evergreens are associated with this time, while nativity sets are displayed in many churches and in some homes.</p>
	<p><b>ZARATOSHT NO DISO Zoroastrian (Iranian)</b></p> <p>Zaratosht no diso is the death anniversary of Prophet Zarathushtra and is a sorrowful occasion. Tradition records that he was assassinated at the age of 77. It is customary to visit the Fire Temple, participate in special remembrance prayers and ponder upon the <i>Gathas</i> or Hymns of Zarathushtra, which embody his eternal message to humanity.</p>
	<p><b>OMISOKA Japanese</b></p> <p>Japanese festival which prepares for the new year by cleansing Shinto home shrines and Buddhist altars. The bells of Buddhist temples are struck 108 times to warn against the 108 evils to be overcome.</p>
	<p><b>HOGMANAY National</b></p> <p>A celebration widely observed throughout the UK, and especially in Scotland, where bagpipes, <i>haggis</i> and first footing are widespread. Clearing one's debts, cleaning the house, welcoming guests and strangers and a host of other traditions feature at this time.</p>